

## MISS SCHEFF WINS "PRIMA DONNA"

Completes Triumph With  
Her Own and Only  
Petite Drum.

CAPABLE COMPANY  
MARKS OFFERING

Opera Takes High Musical Rank  
in Class With "The  
Serenade."

The audience at the Columbia Theater last evening which welcomed Miss Fritzi Scheff in a new comic opera, "The Prima Donna," was as elite as it was large and as large as it was enthusiastic. So high a place does Miss Scheff hold in the regard of Capital theatergoers that the chattering throng that filled every seat and taxed the standing capacity of the theater breathed the spirit of a personal encouragement in striking contrast to the critical attitude of a first night audience. And while the book of Henry Blossom and the music of Victor Herbert may not have received a major share of attention last evening, the general verdict this morning is that this captivating prima donna herself is scarcely more welcome than the new "Prima Donna."

On two occasions last evening applause swept away all barriers and refused to subside until its own good time. The first storm broke when President Taft and Mrs. Taft were ushered into a box, and the second burst with redoubled force when Miss Scheff answered an encore in the second act with a stirring tattoo on her own and only drum.

Perhaps the second occasion was the more momentous for Washingtonians will have the privilege of seeing President Taft many times, but they entertained great fears that the passing of "Mlle. Modiste" had also marked the passing of this latter rare and enjoyable spectacle. These apprehensions proved groundless.

Drum Scores Hit.

First Miss Scheff "commanded the way" to the third component of a sensation. Then, just to show the importance of this modest little drum, she trotted it out and hammered out of it enough sparkle and vim to make every human being in that dignified gathering feel like letting out a war whoop and kicking his respective heels together three times to attest the simple joy of being alive.

Miss Scheff may protest that she does not owe her success to her ability as a drummer. Certainly not. And seldom has she had better opportunities to warble to her own sweet satisfaction than are afforded by the score of Victor Herbert. The singular richness and clarity of her voice were shown to splendid advantage in "The Butterfly." Her vivacious personality as well as her perfect command of every note found expression in "A Little Soldier." Both these factors and an indelible charm that goes to make Miss Scheff's initial success combined to render "When We Command the Army," the musical hit of the performance.

But Miss Scheff, you will say, could go far toward making a success out of anything with a tune, does "The Prima Donna" make good? Washington will approve the verdict of other cities in saying that it does. We will even say that this offering appears destined to take a place not far behind "Mlle. Modiste," notwithstanding all the halo that surrounds the name of the prima donna. Miss Scheff's initial success. That is high praise, indeed.

But one thing could hold it from the eminence attained by the earlier production—that the book, Mr. Herbert has done his best to make it better than Mr. Blossom's. Mr. Blossom's idea was rich. There is no law, unwritten or otherwise, that makes it necessary for the entire company to troop on the stage in close of each act and execute vocal acrobatics. The dramatic climax to the first act is a fine conception which has a fine effect if the liberal allotment of plot did not contain several unwholesome doses of melodrama which seem singularly out of place.

An Added Attraction.

Mons. Beauvivre (Nace Bonville), father of Athene (Miss Scheff) has borrowed heavily from Captain Bordenave (William Harcourt).

Promises to present his daughter as sufficient security for these loans, but when the time comes Athene's father hesitates to present Mlle. Athene to his dissolute creditor. Armed with the note for Beauvivre's heavy debt, Bordenave takes matters in his own hands when he finds an opportunity to meet Mlle. Athene alone. While the young woman makes every effort to escape Bordenave clutches the bargain by burning the note and proceeds to demand forced payments in the form of favors from the prima donna. At the crucial moment this slight wisp of a girl springs a David and Goliath document by dragging this husky captain across the floor and carelessly hurling him into an adjoining room. She accomplishes this feat stupendously by translating literally, for she opens the door with her free hand.

True, a similar situation without its absurd features scored in "The Great Divide." But Miss Scheff is not Margaret Anglin and probably has no aspirations toward emotional acting. Why ring in such a situation in comic opera.

Recalls Earlier Successes.

With this single exception Mr. Blossom has evolved a plot of singular cleverness and Mr. Herbert has composed a score that will stand comparison with "The Serenade" and "The Fortune Teller."

One of the most noteworthy features of the production is the capable company. In James E. Sullivan, "The Prima Donna" exploits a comedian who deserves a place in the first line of fun-makers and his methods are far away from the stage traditions of the average comedian. In "I'll Be Married to the Music of the Band," he has been a success second only to that of Miss Scheff, and in the first act, as musical director of the "Comme d'Or," gave a clever character study.

William K. Harcourt played the blustering army captain with a sureness of touch above comic opera caliber and Martin Hayden uncovered another good singing voice in the second act after an appreciative audience already thought he had more than redeemed the price of admission.

But, say, did you see Fritzi Scheff beat that drum?

J. R. HILDERAND.

MAJESTIC—Moving Pictures and Vaudeville.

A vaudeville program of merit and a moving picture array above the average mark the offering at the Majestic theater this week.

A comedy, "Having One on the House," scored a hit. While a second sketch, "Tom Katz Night Out," ran a close second. Pluto and Pluto gave an original turn as pantomimic and musical clowns. Travelogues and new illustrated songs complete the program.

## "BLUE MOUSE" NOT SPICY, BUT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE

Fails to Qualify for Immortal Five—Goes One Better.

Scores by Sheer Merit of Mirth and Excellent Cast.

Some folks who, way down deep in their souls, are ever hoping that, after the censors of Trenton, N. J.; Richmond, Va.; Evansville, Ill., and even the Capital's purity squad get through with a play, some naughty or at least spicy lines may have been overlooked, the stage should be renovated, fumigated, and, if necessary, reforested. Immediately New York and the curious ones of the country at large wanted to know just what specific plays had attracted the attention and aroused the ire of this reformed manager.

For months Washington had heard rumors and whispers of "The Blue Mouse." A manager in New York who nightly saw the crowds wending their way to the show house across the street where was billed a play said to be even fatter than the fabled old New York lost his temper several weeks ago and declared the stage should be renovated, fumigated, and, if necessary, reforested. Immediately New York and the curious ones of the country at large wanted to know just what specific plays had attracted the attention and aroused the ire of this reformed manager.

Only Near-Disappointment.

This tells why some of the curious of Capital aided in filling the Belasco to overflowing last evening. The next part of the story is the part that tells of the near-pangs of disappointment and the desire of a few of the still more curious to meet with the press agent or the person directly responsible for the report that colored glasses and ear muffs would be necessary for the proper enjoyment of this Fitch production.

Naughty? Nothing of the kind. In "The Blue Mouse" Mr. Fitch gives to the theater-going people a shock with even the slightest thrill.

Things may have been done to "The Blue Mouse" by the blue pencil men who are supposed to know what the country at large wants. "The Blue Mouse" in New York may have been a different play. But if the Shuberts might well take back to the big city the revised edition of Mr. Fitch's play, and if it need never travel through the country with advance notices that excite the type that felt slightly disappointed at the end of last night's performance.

Profits by Changes.

All this about the real character of "The Blue Mouse," and now about the actors. Washington is not seeing the "original New York company," and again Washington is profiting—"again" being used with understanding that "The Blue Mouse" may have been revised for consumption outside of New York.

As the Blue Mouse Eliza Ryan does not appear, it is probable that the knowledge that the fair Mabel has won rent and rooms of praise in her role of the dance hall artist. Some actresses in the role could have held the audience, but Miss Ryan at all times held the audience in the palm of her hand, and even her one swear word sounded cool and innocent.

More of the same may be said of Albert Grant, who as the simple-minded, fat president of a railroad, preferred private secretaries possessed of beautiful wives. Harry Connor, in the "New York company," is known as his real value, but Mr. Grant could have been picked for the original railroad president, and the play-going public would have lost nothing. If there is anything more that can be done to the part than is done by Mr. Grant it remains for a most clever comedian to come forward and do it.

Robert Dempster as the secretary Jamison Lee Finney of the original company.

Cast Uniformly Strong.

Other members of the company are equally strong. Sam Reed, as the liverman from Connors, N. Y., must surely have stepped over at the station between trains and met the original of the part, and Lillian Hall, as the coy little 300-pound wife of the railroad president, was responsible for much of the continued laughter.

In the story of the play you can see the possibilities for amusement. A young secretary of a railroad president discovers that his superior and the secretary being anxious to be advanced to an important position hires a dance hall actress to impersonate his wife. He has a real wife and loves her and when it turns out that the dance hall actress is the Blue Mouse—mistaken by all for his wife and his really and truly wife is taken for The Blue Mouse, one can see many opportunities for complications and Mr. Fitch did not overlook many.

Many friends of Miss Charlie Courtland were interested in watching the work of the young Washington girl who, despite the opposition of her parents, left her home for the stage. Miss Courtland, in addition to playing a minor part, is understood to miss Alie Warner, the real wife.

COLD HURTS FRUITS.

LYNCHBURG, Va., March 23.—The Government thermometers here registered 24 degrees and there is little doubt that much harm to early fruit was done. Early small fruit trees have been blossoming for two weeks and the freeze came with the blossoms wet from Sunday's snow. Late fruits are hardly advanced enough to be injured.

### IT WILL APPEAR

The great exposure of dental fakers and schemers by Washington's foremost dentists. We originated this idea to save Washington people from having their teeth ruined, and we will keep our promise.

WATCH FOR IT.

RED CROSS DENTAL OFFICE.

939 Pa. Ave. N. W.

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### PROGRAM FOR TONIGHT AT CAPITAL THEATERS

COLUMBIA—Fritzi Scheff in "The Prima Donna."  
BELASCO—"The Blue Mouse."  
NATIONAL—John Drew in "Jack Straw."  
CHASE—Vaudeville.  
ACADEMY—"Tony, the Bootblack."  
LYCEUM—"New Century Girls."  
GAYETY—"Girls From Happyland."  
MAJESTIC—Moving Pictures and Vaudeville.

### MURPHY TRAVESTY LEADER AT CHASE'S

Valerie Bergere Adds Another Triumph to Her Already Long List.

Every part of the current Chase program is good, and it has many parts. Among the headline features are W. H. Murphy and Blanche Nichols, who appear in a hilariously laughable burlesque, "The School of Acting." The travesty has to do with a broken-down tragedian who conducts the "school," an amateur playwright, and a subterfuge out of work, who had already been a member of seven different companies this season. Assisting Mr. Murphy and Miss Nichols are Lorna Russell and L. M. Jones. It is one of the funniest burlesques seen here this season.

Another top-liner Valerie Bergere and an excellent supporting company, appearing in a one-act comedy, "The Morning After the Play." Miss Bergere plays the part of an actress who has just met failure, but who is in love with a young man who in turn is claimed by a married society woman. Miss Bergere is given plenty opportunity to display her emotional power, as well as comedy. Emma Campbell and Herbert Warren give her excellent support.

The Big City Quartet is the musical feature of the bill. Messrs. Rover, Bates, Cafferty, and Reed are singers of merit, their respective solos always requiring encores. Mr. Reed's rendition of "Asleep in the Deep" was a treat. The Abner troupe of bicyclists presented many new ideas in trick riding, and close their act with a burlesque race.

Al Lawrence, a popular comedian, gives an irresistibly humorous mimesis of types of people met on the streets.

The Helms are a duo of juvenile program artists who make one forget their youth, and imagine them to be specialists. The "Merry Widow Waltz" was an amusing take-off on the famous operetta.

Newbold and Carrel present "An Interrupted Angling Party," and the vaudeville artist, of to thrill it as a French sailor, completes an interesting bill.

ACADEMY—"Tony, the Bootblack," Full of Melodramatic Action.

"Tony, the Bootblack," at the Academy, is full of action from start to finish.

The heroine is saved from one danger but to be plunged into another, and none of those who are opposed to the Black Hand escapes without being at least once in danger of losing his life.

But all ends happily; the heroine recovers her sight just in time to save her lover from death; after their many adventures the two sets of lovers are united, and the villains are handed over to the police.

What might otherwise be too overpowering in its intensity is relieved throughout by comedy and specialties. Dave Genaro is at all times on the stage, either to amuse his audience as a vaudeville artist, or to thrill it as the hero. The dancing and singing of Genaro and Bailey have long been the excellent features of the entertainment.

Grace Morton, who is stolen by the Black Hand, and whose rescue furnishes the main action, is very well played by Cora Quentin. The play is well staged, the scenery is good, and some of the effects, especially the ride down New York harbor, are excellent.

LYCEUM—"New Century Girls" Up to the Minute.

"The Hotel Thespian" and "Beans" are the two pieces handled in highly creditable fashion by the New Century Girls at the Lyceum this week, both sketches offering excellent entertainment.

A vim and dash seldom seen in the burlesque show marked the work of the entire company. The work of the comedians in the various character parts is above the standard. An exceptionally good olio adds to the performance. Alie Goldman and Barrett and Belle in nonsensical song and dialogue were heartily received.

MAN'S BODY FOUND IN BLACKSMITH'S PIT

RICHMOND, Va., March 23.—A mysterious case was reported to Coroner Taylor when the body of an unidentified white man was found in a wheel pit of a blacksmith shop. The victim's trousers pockets had been cut and turned inside out, thus causing a supposition that the man was either murdered and robbed or was frozen to death after tearing his clothes by falling into the hole.

It is the opinion of the coroner that the man was asleep under a carriage top and that he was either shoved into the pit or rolled into it and was frozen to death.

\$1.00—Hat Pins, 38c

We are showing over 25 all different new and very attractive Hat Pins. Just arrived from Paris, imported to sell at \$1.00—introduction price at 38c. All at special prices. This price goes into effect tomorrow and for the remainder of the week.

Be sure to see our line of Hat Pins before purchasing elsewhere, as we are showing the largest line in the city. All at special prices.

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"Jack Straw" Below Standard of Earlier John Drew Vehicles.

Play Made Possible by Clever Situations When Not Overdrawn.

John Drew, in a fairly typical John Drew play returned to Washington for his annual engagement last night, W. Somerset Maugham's new comedy "Jack Straw" being the vehicle in which the popular actor appears. He is supported by a capable company, including Rose Coghlan and Mary Boland.

It is needless to say that Mr. Drew was as suave and polished as ever. The play itself made an agreeable impression, save for a rather torturous and awkwardly constructed first act, although it cannot be said to come up to the former productions in which Mr. Drew has proven so entertaining heretofore. It is redeemed and made possible, because in the second and third acts Mr. Drew and his supporting cast are finally given an opportunity to find themselves and John Drew can take the center of the stage in a truly characteristic Drew manner. Many of the situations are cleverly drawn, others are so highly exaggerated that they cannot help but amuse.

The plot itself is not altogether a new one. John Drew, as the Archduke of Pomerania, is found acting as a waiter in a fashionable London hotel. The archduke is an adventurer, who, wandering from home under the assumed name of Jack Straw, has become popularly known as "the waiter." He meets here an old friend named Holland, accompanied by his friend, Lady Wainly, who is a fashionable London hostess. The archduke is an adventurer, who, wandering from home under the assumed name of Jack Straw, has become popularly known as "the waiter." He meets here an old friend named Holland, accompanied by his friend, Lady Wainly, who is a fashionable London hostess.

Basis of Plot.

While shipping tea Holland and Lady Wainly are unwilling witnesses to the snubbing of Mrs. Abbott, the wife of a curate, by Mrs. Parker Jennings, who together with her newly rich husband, daughter and son, are also in the dining room.

Jack Straw, to pose as a nobleman, is induced to accept a position as a waiter in the hotel. He is met by the daughter of the curate, who is also in the dining room. Jack Straw, to pose as a nobleman, is induced to accept a position as a waiter in the hotel. He is met by the daughter of the curate, who is also in the dining room.

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